DIADIN 402-75
18 FEBRUARY 1975

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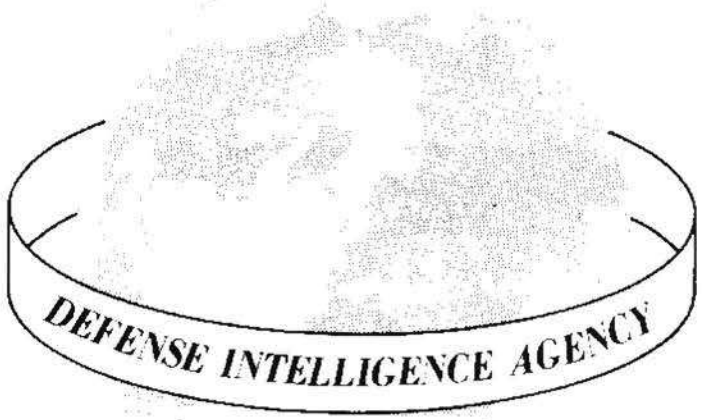
DEFENSE INTELLIGENCE NOTICE



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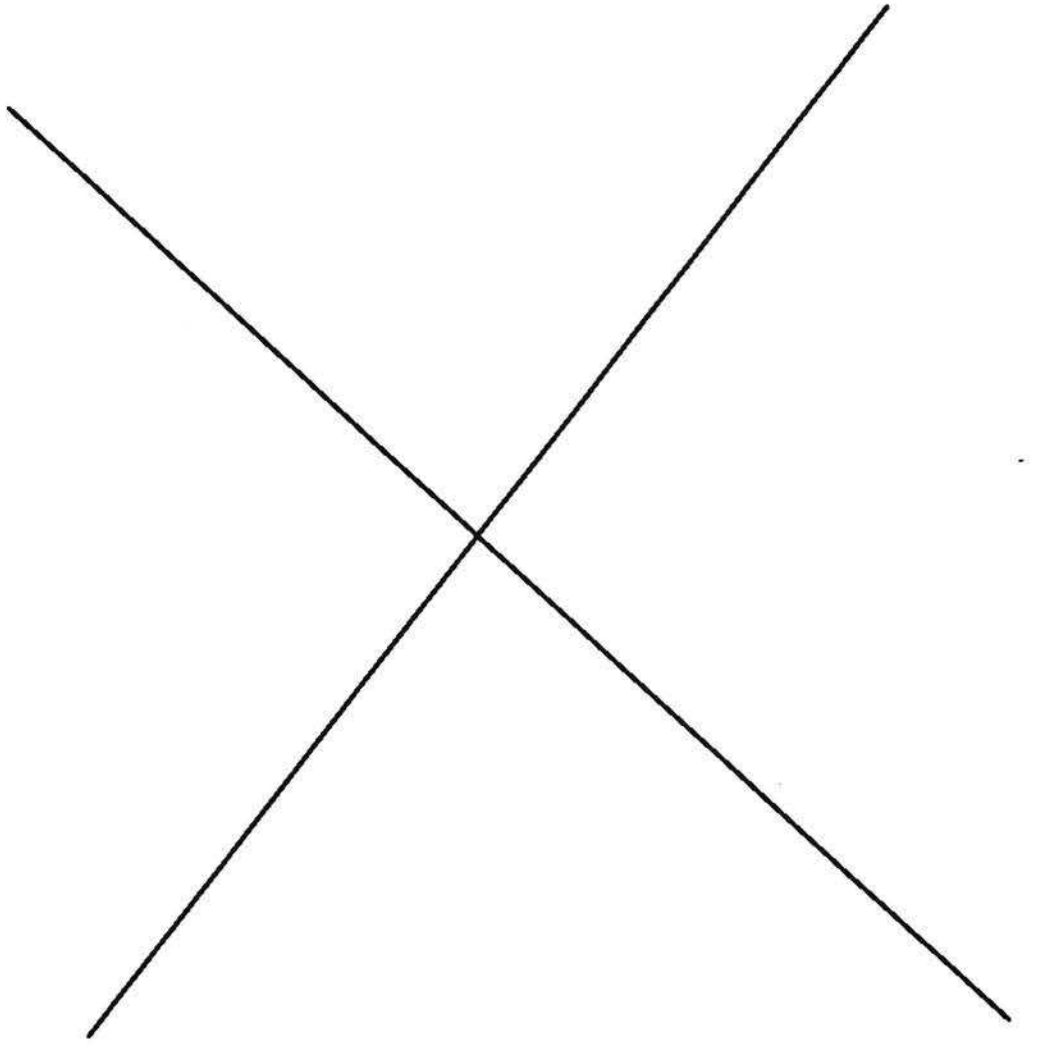

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This Notice is designed to provide intelligence in support of future decisions with respect to security policy or posture.

ARGENTINA

LEFTIST AND RIGHTIST TERRORISM INTENSIFIES AS ARMY TROOPS CONTINUE COUNTERGUERRILLA OPERATION.

~~(C/NFD)~~ Terrorism from both ends of the political spectrum flared anew over the weekend in various parts of the country, while army troops continued their counterguerrilla sweep through the northern province of Tucuman. Political assassinations had abated recently from the one killing a day average that had prevailed since Juan Peron's death last July. Of late, the leftist Peoples Revolutionary Army (ERP) had confined itself largely to rhetoric, probably as a result of the setbacks suffered at the hands of the police in late 1974. The rightist, allegedly government directed, Argentine Anti-Communist Alliance (AAA) had assumed a lower profile in the face of strong criticism from various quarters due to its indiscriminate vigilante tactics. The initiation of the army-led counterguerrilla operation may have resulted in both groups intensifying their activities.

~~(C/NFD)~~ The government is restricting information on the Tucuman operation and probably will continue to do so until it achieve a degree of success. This long-awaited army operation is not likely to result in quick victory for the government over the ERP. The guerrillas have an established logistics base and are well-equipped for fighting in the jungle and mountainous terrain of Tucuman. On the other hand, the Argentine Army is not extensively trained in counterinsurgency operations. To correct this difficiency, regular units engaged in the operation have been augmented with commando-qualified instructors from the infantry school in Buenos Aires and officers from commando-type units. Small-unit commando tactics should prove more productive than the conventional company-size tactics for which the majority of army units, manned mostly by conscripts, are trained.

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~~(C/NFD)~~ A principal reason for army leaders' reluctance to assume a direct counterguerrilla role has been the fear that the populace could be alienated by the population-control measures that would probably be required to be employed. The army is still suffering from the tarnished image that seven years of frequently heavy-handed military rule produced. Consequently, the army is making every effort to gain the support of the populace. This will not be easy, however, because of the ERP's long association with the people of Tucuman. The guerrillas have enjoyed such support that they reportedly fielded a team in a local sugar worker's "Futbol" league. The key to a successful government anti-terrorist campaign in Tucuman Province will be the effective exploitation of intelligence and the ability to conduct sustained counterguerrilla operations. However, even if the army succeeds in neutralizing the ERP in Tucuman, the terrorists can be expected to continue striking back elsewhere with their strongest weapon-selective, urban-based terrorism. ~~(GDS 31 Dec 81)~~

(b)(3):10 USC 424

SOURCES: [redacted] 121845Z Feb 75 ~~(C/NFD)~~ and 131830Z Feb 75 (U)

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(b)(3):10 USC 424

PREPARED BY: [redacted]

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